

T V V O
S E R M O N S
Vpon the first words of
Christs last Sermon,

I O H N 14.1.

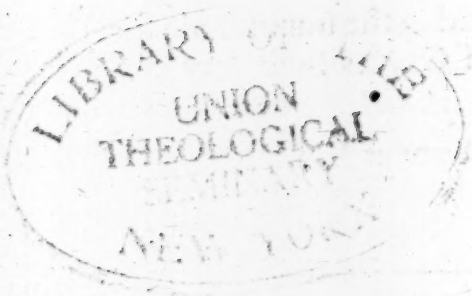
Being also the *last* Sermons of
R I C H A R D S I B B S D. D.
Preached to the honourable society
of Grayes Inne, *Inne 21.*
and 28. 1635.

Who the next Lords day follow-
ing, dyed, and rested from all
his labours.

2 Sam. 23. 1. *These are the last words of
the sweet singer of Israel.*

The third Edition.

L O N D O N,
Printed by *Thomas Harper*, for *Law-
rence Chapman*, and are to be sold at
his shop in Holborne, at Chancery
lane end. 1637.





Honoratissimo Domino,
Domino *Roberto*, Comiti
WARWICENSI,

Has
Mellitissimi Theologi
Richardi Sibbs, S. Theol.
Doctōris,

(Quem
Percharum habuit, cujusque
concionantis auditor erat assi-
dus, unà cum nobilissima
Familia)

Cygneas Conciones,
In
Pientissimi Authoris Affectus, necnon
ipsorum singularis obsequii

consecrator.

D. D. D.

Thomas Goodwin.
Philippus Nye.

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*The Authors Prayer
before his Ser-
mon.*

GRacious & holy
Father, which
hast sanctified
this day for thy owne
service and worship, and
for the furthering of us
in the way of saluation,
and hast made a most
gracious promise, that
when two or three bee

A 3 ga-

gathered together in thy
name, thou wilt be there
in the midst of them;
vouchsafe then wee be-
seech thee the perfor-
mance of this thy pro-
mise unto us now gathe-
red together in thy Name
to pray unto thee, to
heare and speake thy ho-
ly and blessed Word; and
so sanctifie our hearts by
thy holy Spirit at this
time, that wee may per-
forme these holy servi-
ces as shall bee most to
thy glory and our owne
comfort. Vnworthy we
are in our selves to ap-
peare

peare in thy most holy
presence, both by reason
of the sins of our nature,
and the sins of our lives,
even since that time that
wee have had some
knowledge of thy bles-
sed truth; which holy
truth we have not enter-
tained nor professed as
wee should have done,
but often times against
the light that thou hast
kindled in our hearts by
thy VVord and Spirit,
we have committed ma-
ny finnes; and amongst
the rest, we confesse our
finnes against thy holy

Ordinance, our not preparing our hearts unto it, nor profiting by it as we should and might have done, giving thy Majesty hereby just cause to curse thy owne holy Ordinance unto us: but thou art a gracious and merciful Father unto us in Iesus Christ, in the abundance of thy love and mercy: in him wee come unto thee, beseeching thee for his sake not to give us up to these inward and spirituall judgements. But vouchsafe us a true insight into
our

our owne estates, without
deceiving of our
owne soules, and from
thence true humiliation;
and then we beseech thee
to speake peace unto us
in thy Christ, and say to
our soules by thy holy
Spirit, that thou art our
salvation: and for clearer
evidence that wee are in
thy favour, let us finde
the blessed worke of thy
holy Spirit opening our
understandings, clearing
our judgements, kind-
ling our affections, dis-
covering our corrupti-
ons, framing us every

A S

Way

way to be such as thou
maist take pleasure and
delight in; and because
thou hast ordained thy
holy word to bee a light
unto our feet, & a guide
and direction to all our
wayes and paths, and
to be a powerfull means
to bring us more and
more out of the thral-
dome of sin and Sathan,
to the blessed liberty of
thy children; we beseech
thee therefore to blesse
thy word to these, and
all other good ends and
purposes for which thou
hast ordained it; and
grant

grant wee beseech thee,
that now at this time out
of it we may learne thy
holy will, and then la-
bour to frame our lives
thereafter, as may bee
most to thy glory and
our owne comfort; and
that for Iesus Christ his
sake, thine onely Sonne,
and our blessed Saviour,
Amen.

The

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THE FIRST SERMON.

Ioh. 14. ch. 1. verſe.

Let not your hearts be troubled: ye beleeve in God, beleeve alſo in me.

HOly men as they be trees of righteouſneſſe, and deſire to bee fruitfull at all times, ſo moſt eſpecially towards their end, having but a ſhort time to live in the world, they be willing to leave the world with

with a good favour; so it was with *Iacob*; so with *Moses*, as appeares in his excellent Song made before his death; you may see it in King *Salomon* and *David* before their deaths, but especially in our Saviour. The nearer to heaven, the more heavenly minded; when grace and glory are ready to joyne, the one to be swallowed up of the other, then grace is most glorious. All the passages of Christ are comfortable, but none more comfortable then those Sermons of his, that were delivered a little before his death; of all words that come from loving men to those they love, such are most remarkable as be spoken when they be ready to dye,

dye, because then men are most serious, they being about the most serious businesse : then they be wisest, and best able to judge : for the consideration of their end makes them wise. And therefore saith God, *Oh that my people were wise to consider their latter end!* And, *teach me to number my dayes, that I may apply my heart to wisdom,* saith Moses. And indeed there is no wisdom to that : for it teacheth men to passe a right judgement upon all things in the world: they be no longer drunke with the prosperity of the world, they bee no longer swayed with opinion, but they passe an estimation of things as they are.

Psal. 90.

Besides, love at that time
is.

is especially set on worke. Therefore our blessed Saviour being now to offer himselfe a sacrifice on the Crosse, he sweetly delivereth these words before his departure, *Let not your hearts be troubled*: Let us heare them therefore, as the dying words of our Saviour, to his Disciples, and in his Disciples, to us all, as in the 17. of Saint *Iohn*, *I pray not for them onely, but for all such as shall beleeeve in me*, through their word, for his comforts concerne us all, as his prayers did.

This Chapter is sweetly mixt of comforts, counsels, and gracious promises, but especially it affords matter of comfort: marke who it is that gives this comfort, our
bles-

fed Saviour; And at what time, when he was to sacrifice himselfe.

What admirable love and care, and pitie is in this mercifull high Priest of ours, that should so think of comforting his Disciples, as to forget himselfe, and his owne approaching death? It is the nature of love so to doe, and we should imitate our blessed Saviour in it: you see how hee laboureth to strengthen them, especially towards his end, hee knew they would then need it most, and therefore hee endeavoureth by all meanes to strengthen them both by counsell, as here by the Pasche-over, and by a newly instituted Sacrament.

But what need wee wonder

der at this in our blessed Saviour who so regarded us, as he left heaven, tooke our nature, became man; put himselfe under the Law, became sinne.

The words containe a disswasion from over-much trouble, and then a direction to beleeve in God, and Christ: comforts must be founded on strong reasons; For we are reasonable and understanding creatures, and God workes on us answerably to our principles. He stayes our spirits by reasons stronger then the grievance. For what is comfort, but that which establisheth and upholds the soule against that evill which is feared or felt, from a greater strength of reason which
over.

over-mastereth the evill. If the grievance bee but even with the comfort, then the consolation workes not: but Christs comforts are of an higher nature, then any trouble can be, for hee not onely dissuades from trouble, but also perswades to confidence, *Be of good comfort, I have overcome the world.*

The occasion of this comforting them, and of removing their discouragements was this: In the former Chapter, he had told them, that hee should leave them, and that they should leave him, the best of them all, even *Peter* should take offence at him, and deny him, and that all the rest should leave him: From whence they might

might gather, that the approaching trouble should be great, That should cause *Peter* to deny him, and them all to forsake him: And thence must needs arise great scandals. Our Saviour saw by the power of his God-head, into their hearts, and like enough, in their lookes he saw a spirit of discouragement seizing on them, for his departure, and *Peters* fall, their forsaking of him, and the persecutions that would follow. And therefore Christ discerning this dejection of their spirits, he raiseth them by this, *Let not your hearts be troubled.* The heavenly Physitian of our soules applyeth then the remedy when it is the fittest season.

There

There was some good in their trouble, something naturally, and something spiritually good. There was ground of naturall trouble at the departure of such a friend, at the hearing of such persecutions: For we are flesh, not Steele, and in that sence, Christ was troubled himselfe to shew the truth of his manhood: nay trouble is the seasoning of all heavenly comforts, so as there were no comforts, if there were no trouble: and therefore this naturall trouble was not disallowed by Christ. There was likewise something spiritually good, in this trouble, they loved their Master, who they saw was going away; and they knew it was a shamefull thing

thing for them to forsake him: there was love in them towards him all this while, Christ could discern gold in oare, some good in a great deale of ill; and therefore loved them againe, and manifested it by comforting them, *Let not your hearts bee troubled*: They were right in this principle, that all comfort depends on the presence of Christ. And so the maine ground of the sorrow was good. For as all heavenly light, and heate, and influence comes from the Sunne, it being all gathered into that body: so all heavenly comfort is gathered into Christ, and therefore must come to us from Christs presence, bodily or spiritually. Their error was

was in tying all comfort to a bodily, a corporall presence. As if it were necessary for the Sunne to come downe and abide upon the earth, to bestow its heat and influence; and therefore he tels them, that though hee was to goe away, yet hee would send another comfortor, the holy Ghost.

And then they were overcome by an opinion, that it would goe worse with them when Christ was gone: therefore Christ telleth them that it should be better for them, and indeed it was better: Christ did not take away his blessed presence for their disadvantage, but for their good. G O D never takes any thing from his children, but he maketh
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it up in a better kinde. If Christ takes away his bodily presence, he leaveth his spirituall presence, and more abundantly.

So that though they were led with sensible things and what they saw not, they could hardly beleewe, yet Christ lookes to what is good in them, and accepts it: he saw what was naught in them, with a purpose to purge it, what was naturally weake in them, to strengthen it, and therefore hee counsels them, *Let not your hearts be troubled.*

The thing that I will first observe out of the words, is, That the best Christians are subject to be troubled, to be pensive, and dejected more then should be.

Indeed

Indeed our Saviour Christ himselfe was troubled, but his trouble was like the shaking of cleare water in a crySTALL glasse. There was no mud in the bottome; but our trouble is of another kinde, and apt to be inordinate.

We may carry this truth through the whole Scripture, and shew how *Hannah* was in bitternesse of spirit, which exceeded so, that *Eli* a good man mistakes her, supposing that she was overcome with drinke.

Hezekiah a good King, was in such bitternesse, that like a Crane or Swallow, he did chatter. And *David* complained that his spirit was over-whelmed within him; and *Jonah* cryes out,

B

that

that hee was in the belly of hell.

And God will have it so, partly for conformity to our head; and partly that we may be knowne to our selves, that we may discern where our weakenesse lyeth; and so be better instructed to seek to him in whom our strength lyeth.

He suffers us likewise to be troubled for the preventing of spirituall sins, pride, and security, and the like.

And partly in regard of others, that we may be pittifull; Christ was man for this end, that he might be a mercifull high Priest, and we have much more need to know and feeble the infirmities that are in our selves, that we may be mercifull to

others; that we may not be harsh and censorious upon the troubles of others; from want of which consideration proceeded *Elies* rashnesse in passing that censure upon *Hannah*.

But how shall we know that our hearts are more troubled then they should be? For I lay this for a ground: That we may sinne in being over-much troubled, at things for which it is a sinne not to be troubled; If they had not beene at all affected with the absence of Christ; it had been a sinne, and no lesse then stupidity: yet it was their sinne to be over-much troubled. In a word therefore for answer, a trouble is sinfull, when it hinders us in duty, or from
B 2 duty :

duty : when it hinders us in duties to God, or to others.

Or from duty, that is, when the soule is disturbed by it, and like an Instrument out of tune, made fit for nothing, or like a limb out of joynt, that moves, not onely uncomelily, but painfully, and becomes unfit for action : when we finde this in our trouble, we may know it is not as it should be.

There be some affections especially that are causes of over-much trouble, feare of evils to come, sorrow for evils that at present seize on us. Now when these doe hinder us from duty, or trouble us in duty, they bee exorbitant and irregular.

Naturally affections should be helps to duty, they being
the

the winde that carry the soule on, and the spirituall wings of the soule : so that a man without affections is like the dead sea, that moves not at all. But then they must be regulated, and ordered, they must be raised up, and laid downe, at the command of a spirituall understanding: when they be raised up of themselves, by shallow and false conceits, and opinions, they be irregular, when they be raised up by a right judgement of things, and laid downe againe when they ought to bee, then they are right and orderly.

Now besides the hurt that is in such affections themselves, Sathan loves to fish in these troubled waters. The affections are never

stirred and railed up irregularly, and exorbitantly, but Sathan joynes with them. And therefore we have need to keepe our affections of griefe and feare within their due bounds : Sathan is a curious observer of any excesse in our passions, and in iust correction (to speake the mildest of it) God lets loose Sathan to joyne with that excesse. And therefore the Apostle saith wisely, Let not the Sun goe downe upon your wrath, neither give place to the Diuell, because as soone as ever we give way to any excesse of affection, Sathan fishes in these waters, and joynes with that excesse. He being a spirit of darkenesse, loves to dwell in the soule when it is in darknesse.

nesse. And therefore when it is clouded by passion (as all passions beyond their due measure, are as clouds that darken the soule) Sathan that workes in darke-nesse, then seizes on the soule presently.

That was *Sauls* case, hee was envious at *David*, being of a proud and haughty spirit, that could not endure competition: and Sathan tooke his time to worke on him. And therefore it is said he was troubled with an e-vill spirit.

But *trouble of Spirit* is too large an Argument, I will not now stand upon it, onely I will shew that we should not yeeld to excesse of trouble any way. And the reasons are:

B 4.

First;

Chap. 8.
10.

First, we wrong our owne selves when we give way to grieve and sorrow that is immoderate and inordinate: The soule is as it were put out of joynt by it; we make actions difficult unto us, the wheelles of the soule are thereby taken off; joy and comfort are as it were oyle to the soule. And therfore *Nebemiah* saith, The joy of the Lord is your strength; when therefore we give way to feare, and grieve, and such passions, it weakeneth the soule in action. And then againe they are as it were a cloud betwixt Gods love, and us, and so the soule is hindered of much comfort and enlargement: joy enlargeth the soule, but grieve streighteneth it: comfort raiseth

raiseth up the soule, grieve and sorrow weigh downe the soule. A Christian should be of a straight, upright, and enlarged spirit. When therefore the spirit is streightened, when it is prest downe and dejected, a Christian is not in his right minde, in his due and proper frame.

Besides, if we regard God himselfe, we should take heed that the soule, be not thus distempered, for by over-much sorrow and grieve what a great deale of dishonour doe we to God, it proceeding from a mistake of his goodnesse and providence? And withover-much feare and sorrow, there is alwayes joyned murmuring and discontent, and a spirit

unsubdued to God, and his Spirit. There is a wronging as of his care in providence, so of his graciousnesse in his promises. There is a grieving of his good Spirit, a questioning of his government, as if he did not dispose of things as he should, when we will have it one way, and God will have it another way. There is likewise a great deale of pride in dejections and discontent. The most discontented spirit in the world is the Divell, and none prouder. It argues a great deale of pride, and sullenness to be affectedly sad, and dejected, as if such worthy and excellent persons as wee should be so afflicted: or there were greater cause for us to be dejected then raised

raised up. Whereas if we ballance our grounds of comfort (being Christians) as we should do, they would appeare incomparably above the grounds of our discouragements: so it is a wrong to God, and his truth, and his gracious sweet government to yeeld to a dejected sullen disposition.

It is likewise a wrong to others: for it maketh us unfit for any office of love to them, when we plodde and pore so much upon our discontentments, and drink up our spirits, and eate up our hearts, it disables the soule, taking away not onely the strength, but also the willingnesse of the soule.

Besides the scandall that it brings on Religion, and the

the best waies, as if there were not enough in Religion to comfort the soule.

But you will say, Religion breeds a great deale of trouble, and pensivenesse. It is indeed the speech of the shallow people of the world, Religion makes men sad.

And it is true, that as our Saviour Christ here had made his Disciples sad, by telling them that they would leave him, and that a great scandall would be taken at his Crosse, and shamefull suffering; but yet withall biddes them not be troubled, and gives them grounds of comfort: so Religion will make men sad: For it discovers truths, and sad truths. I but the same Religion will cheare them

up

up againe, yea, it casts them
downe, that it may raile
them up. The Sunne in the
morning raiseth clouds, but
when it hath strength it scat-
ters them. G O D intending
solid, and substantiall com-
fort, doth first beget trou-
bles, and discovers true
grounds of trouble: he lets
us see that all is not well, but
still as Religion brings any
trouble, so it brings with it
great remedies against these
troubles: and that G O D
that raiseth a soule to see
just matter of griefe, will
by its spirit shew its due,
and right portion in
comfort. Thus to bee
sorrowfull and sad in some
measure is from Religi-
on, but that which will pre-
vent the excesse and over-
mea-

measure of it, is from Religion likewise.

So that it is a scandall to religion to be over-much dejected.

Besides, though we should be troubled for sinne, yet to bee over-much troubled for sinne is a dishonour to Christ, and to the love of God, in Christ: for it is as if we had not in him a sufficient remedy for that great malady. As be it grieve for the troubles of the Church: as not to be troubled at the affliction of *Ioseph* is branded for a sinne: So to be too much cast downe, as if Christ had cast off the government from his shoulders, or had not the name of the Church on his breast in heaven (as the high Priest had

had the names of the twelve Tribes) in his breast-plate, to be so cast downe as to be taken off from prayer, and from the use of all good means to helpe the Church, this is sinfull. So also when grieve for sin makes us forget the mercies of God in Christ, to forget the healing vertue of him our brazen Serpent, to neglect to search our grounds of comforts, and to yeeld to Sathan, to temptation. Even over-much sadnesse, though it bee for sinne, or for the Church, it is hurtfull and scandalous.

Iosuah was much cast downe when he saw it went not well with *Israel*. but get thee up *Iosuah*, saith God, what dost thou lying here?

up

up and doe thy duty, consider what is amisse. There is an *Achan* in the Campe: and so when things go not well, let not your thoughts bee conversant about the matters of trouble, so much as about your duty. So we see it is incident to Gods people to be over-much troubled, and we see also the reasons why it should not be so, because it is injurious to God, to our selves, and others every way.

And after all this there is much reason in this, that *Christ* hath forbidden it, let not your hearts be troubled.

Object.

But *Christ* could as well have cured it being God, as easily as forbidden it.

Answ.

It is true, but he cures it by forbidding it: with the words,

words, there went forth a spirit of comfort into their hearts, an influence of grace accompanied his cōmands, for the Word and Spirit goe together: *Christ* deales with men by men. The Spirit of comfort is a spirit of truth, and therefore God comforts by truths. Hee gives us sanctified understandings and affections, and then workes on them by sanctified truths.

And sometimes *Christ* cures it by reall comforts; for comforts are either rationall, which are fetched from grounds, which faith ministers, or reall from the presence of any thing which comforts; as the sight of friends, or the accommoda-
ting of us in any thing
where-

wherein we see the love of God conveighed: how many reall comforts doth God bestow, when he fitteth us with conveniences in our way to Heaven, so that wee may reade the love of God in them? God doth not onely comfort us by his gracious promise, by his Word, and Sacraments, administering heavenly comforts by them, but also by the conveighing of himselfe, and his love by outward comforts that we enjoy in the world: howsoever carnall men abuse them, making all things to worke for the worst: yet that love that intends Heaven, sweetens all things in the passage to Heaven to his children, because they see the love of God

God in the least comfort.

Againc, observe from this here, let not your hearts be troubled, what is the seat of comfort, the heart, the seat of comfort is the seat of griefe: There must be an application of comfort suteable to the griefe, and the heart must be comforted.

And therefore in *Isa. 40. 1, 2.* Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, speake to the heart. As the griefe sinks and soakes to the root of the heart: so doe Christs comforts, like true cordials indeed, that goe as deep as the grievance. If the griefe goes to the heart, the comfort must go as deep. Now God the Father of spirits, and the Holy Ghost the Comforter, knowes and searches our spirits,

spirits, they know all the corners of the heart, they can banish feare and sorrow, out of every cranny, and bring light, heat, and influence into every part of the soule. And therefore Christ saith, Let not your hearts be troubled.

Now for the wayes whereby we must labour to comfort our hearts (amongst many that I might speake of) I will name a few.

First of all, there must be a due search into the heart, of the grounds of our trouble; for oftentimes Christians are troubled, they cannot tell wherefore: As children that will complaine they know not why. I speake not of hypocrites that will complaine of that which

which is not a true griefe to them; like some Birds that make greatest noyse, when they be furthest from their nests: But of some poore Christians that are troubled, but distinctly know not the ground of it. But search the heart ingenuously, and truely to the bottome of it, and see if there be not some *Achan* in the Campe, some sinne in the heart (for sinne is like winde when it gets into the veines, it will have vent, and a troublesome one: and so will sinne, if it get into the soule) it is that indeed which causeth all trouble. And therefore search your hearts throughly, what sinne lyeth there unrepented of, and for which you have

have not beene humbled.

And when you have found out your sinne, give it vent by confession of it to God, and in some cases to others.

And when we have done so, consider what promises, and comforts, in that word of God are fitted to that condition; for we can be in no condition, but there are comforts for it, and promises fitted to yeeld comforts for every malady. And it will be the wisdom of a Christian to accomodate the remedy to the sore of his heart. And therefore we ought to be skilfull and well seene, in the word of God, that we may store up comforts before-hād. Our Saviour Christ tels them before-hand

hand of the scandall of the Crosse, and of *Peters* deny-all, that they might lay up strength and spirituall armour against the day of try-all. Those comforts do not (for the most part) hold out in the day of adversity, which were not procured in the day of prosperity. It is not wisdom to be to learn Religion when we should use it: and therefore let us be spirituall good husbands for our soules, by storing up comforts out of the Word of God, and then we shall have no more to doe, then to remember the comforts that we did before-hand know.

And there be some promises of more generall use, that are *Catholica*, fitted for
all

*Non durant
in adver-
sis que non
in pace
quesita.*

all sorts of grievances : and of these we must make use, when we cannot thinke of particular ones. As the promises that concerne forgiveness of sinne. Thinke of Gods mercy in pardoning sinne with admiration; because sinne will be presented us in such terrible colours, that if God be not presented in as gracious colours, wee shall sinke: and therefore set out Christ in his mercies, and all-sufficiency, when sinne is aggravated to be in its hainousnesse, and out of measure sinfulnesse : as the Prophet *Micah* doth, who is a God like our God, that pardoneth iniquity, transgression and sin, &c. Likewise how many promises and comforts are there in that

that one promise, Luke 11.
*He will give his spirit to them
that aske him.* And here our
Saviour promiseth to send
the Comforter: all graces
and all comforts are inclu-
ded in the Spirit of grace,
and comfort; his Spirit is a
Spirit of all grace: and ther-
fore our Saviour thought
that hee promised enough
when he said he would send
them the Comforter: and so
what a world of comfort is
in that promise! *All things
shall worke together for the best
to them that love God:* yea
those things that are worst
shall work together; though
they be hostile, and oppo-
site one to another, yet they
joyne issue in this, they bee
all for the good of Gods
people. As in a clocke

C

the

the wheelles goe severall wayes, but all joyne to make the clocke strike : And so in the carriage and ordering of things, one passage crosses another, but in the issue, we shall be able to say, all things worke together for the best, I found God turning all things for my good. And I could not have beene without such a crosse, such an affliction. And so for present assistance in your callings or straits, remember that promise made to *Iosuah*, which is repeated in the 13. of the *Hebrews*, I will not faile thee, nor forsake thee : a promise which is five times renewed in Scripture, and how much comfort is in that, that he will vouchsafe by his spirit a gracious presence

sence in all conditions whatsoever! And likewise that of *David*, Psalme 23. Though I walke in the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I feare no ill, for thou art with me. It was a terrible supposition made, that though he should walke in the valley of the shadow of death, yet hee would feare no evill. These promises well digested will arme the soule with confidence, that it shall bee able to put any case of trouble: As in the 27. *Psalme*, *David* puts cases, The Lord is my strength, the Lord is the light of my countenance, of whom shall I be afraid? Though thousands shall rise against me, yet in this I will be confident. If our hearts be established by the word

of God, settled in the truth of such promises, by the spirit of God, we may set God, and his truth, against all troubles that can arise from Sathan, and hell, and the instruments of Sathan, or our owne hearts. And therefore it is a great wrong to God, and his truth, if we know not our portion of comfort, and use it, as occasion serves. More particulars I omit, leaving them to your owne industry, the Scripture being full of them.

4.

When we have these promises, let us labour to understand them thoroughly, to understand the grounds of our comfort in them, and to beleeve the truth of them, which are as true as God, who is truth it selfe. And then

then to love them, and digest them in our affections, and so make them our own, and then to walke in the strength and comfort of them.

Labour likewise to have them fresh in memory: it is a great defect of Christians, they forget their consolation, as it is in the *Hebrewes*: though wee know many things, yet we have the benefit of our comfort from no more than we remember.

But above all, if wee will keep our hearts from trouble, let us labour to keep unspotted consciences. Innocency and diligence are marvellous preservers of comfort. And therefore if the conscience be spotted, and uncleane, wash it in
C 3 the

5.

Heb. 12. 5.

6.

the bloud of Christ, which is first purging, and then purifying. It first purgeth the soule being set aworke to search our sinnes, and confesse them, which maketh us see our need of Christ, who dyed to satisfie divine justice. Then God sprinkles our heart with this bloud, which was shed for all penitent sinners: by which when the heart is purged, the conscience will be soone satisfied also, by Christs bloud. And when it is purged, and pacified, then keep it clean, for a foule soule is alwayes a troubled soule, and though it may be quiet, yet it is sure to breake out afterwards.

And because there can be no more comfort then there is care of duty: therefore together

gether with innocency, let us be carefull of all duties, in all our severall relations: let us consider in what relations we stand, and what duties we owe, and be carefull to satisfie them all. Neglect of duty is a debt, and debts are troublesome; When the soule reflects upon the omission of a necessary duty, I owe such a duty to such a person, I should have done such a thing, in such a relation, but I have omitted it, it is a disquietment, and that upon good grounds; and if you have beene negligent, there must be an actuall renewing of the Covenant, and a setting upon the duty with fresh endeavours to make amends for former negligences, or else the

soule shall have no comfort, nor will God suffer it to admit of comfort. And therefore *worke out your salvation with feare and trembling.* The reason that men doe still tremble, and are troubled with this doubt, and that feare, is, because their saluatiō is not wrought out, something is left undone, & their consciences tell thē so.

8.

But above all, that wee may receive comfort, let us labour for a spirit of faith. Therefore here it is said, *You beleeve in God, beleeve also in me.* Christ brings them to faith for comfort. And hee sets downe a double object of faith, *God*, that is, the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost: and *Christ*, considered as Mediator, and Christ brings

brings them to himselfe,
(*Beleeve also in me*) because
he would fence them against
the future scandall of his
suffering. As if hee should
say; You will hereafter
when you see mee so har-
dled, and upon the Crosse,
doubt, and call in question,
whether I am God, and the
Messiah of the world, or no,
But if you beleeve in God,
beleeve in me. For howsoe-
ver in love to you, and man-
kinde, I tooke mans nature
on me, and am abased; yet
in my greatest abasement,
remember this, that I am
God. And surely there is
nothing can stay the soule
more, especially when it is
deepely humbled; then to
consider *God in the second*
person incarnate, and abased,

and crucified, and made a curse, and sinne for us, to see the great God of heaven and earth, whose excellencies wee cannot comprehend, to take our nature, and in our nature to suffer for us those things which he did endure. This will establishe the soule indeed. Can the soule thinke that this was done for any small, or to little purpose? Or can there be any griefe, or sinne, that should hinder comfort, or perswasion of the possibility of pardon, when the great God became man, on purpose to dye for sinne? Wee may set this against all discouragements whatsoever. And therefore, beleeve in God, beleeve also in mee. Howsoever you see mee abased,

abased, yet you may have comfort in my abasement, for it is for you. And therefore saith *Paul*, *I rejoyce to know nothing, but Iesus Christ, and him crucified.* That which proud, and Atheisticall Heathens took scandall at, that he rejoyceth in, *God forbid that I should glory in any thing, but in the Crosse of Christ*, Peace of conscience, joy in the holy Ghost, reconciliation, and title to happinesse is all founded upon Christ crucified.

And then againe you see he joynes both together (*We beleeve in God, beleeve also in me*) to shew the distinction of persons in the Trinity, God the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost; all our faith is resolved at length into one
God,

God, but yet withall into three persons in that Divine nature, because as there is God the Father offended, so there must be a God to satisfie that God, and there must be a God to reveale, and apply that satisfaction. The soule is so full of doubt-ings, that nothing can set it downe, but that which is above the soule, and above the devill. And therefore for our salvation, and to give us comfort, there is a necessity of three persons in the God-head, The Father is offended, God in the second person must satisfie offended justice; and God in the third person must reveale and apply that satisfaction for comfort. And therefore he namest them distinctly

ly (*Ye beleeve in God, &c.*)
 And because we cannot be-
 leeve in God the Father, but
 by beleving in Christ, ther-
 fore hee joynes them toge-
 ther (*ye beleeve in God, ye
 beleeve also in me,*) *No man
 comes to the Father, but by the
 Sonne.* GOD the Father
 dwels in the light that no
 mortall eye can approch un-
 to, only he hath manifested
 himselfe in his Sonne, who
 is the ingraven Image of his
 person; God shines in the
 face of Christ, and as hee
 comes downe, and makes
 himselfe knowne to us in
 his Sonne, so wee must goe
 up to him in his Sonne, as
 he saith afterwards: *I am the
 way, the truth, and the life.*
 There is no going to the Fa-
 ther but by me: nothing is
 more

more terrible then to conceive of God, out of Christ, for so he is a *consuming fire*: therefore thinke of God as ours in Christ, carry Christ our elder Brother with us, and desire God to look upon us in his Sonne.

Quest.

Now how doth faith in Christ ease the soule in trouble?

Answ.

Many wayes: I will name a few. Faith in Christ baniſheth troubles, and bringeth in comfort.

Because it is an emptying grace; it emptieth us of our selves, and so makes us cleave to another, and thereby becomes a grace of union. It is such a grace as brings the soule, and Christ together. Now Christ being the fountaine of comfort,

fort, God having treasured all comfort in him, for the fulnesse of the God-head dwels in Christ, and faith causeth Christ to dwell in us, brings the soule and Christ together, and so must needs make way for comfort, for it makes us one with the fountaine of comfort. And by its repeated acts derives fresh comfort.

Againe, faith establissheth the heart. Now to establissh the soule, there must be a solid Basis, as in building there must be a foundation, and a planting upon that foundation. Now here is a foundation, God & Christ, and there must be a grace to found, and bottome the soule thereupon, and that is faith, and so the soule is
esta-

established. The chaine and connexion of causes herein is this. God the Father in Christ, and by the holy Ghost conveyes comforts, through the word laid hold upon by faith. It is not the word alone, for that is but as the veines and arteries, that conveigh the bloud, and spirits. So the Spirit being conveighed by the promises, helpeth the soul to lay it self upō Christ by faith, which is a grace of union, by which union with him the soule is established.

And then againe faith stirreth up such graces, as doe comfort the soule, as hope in all good things promised. And therefore in the next Verse he addes to comfort them, *In my Fathers house are many*

many mansions; and faith is the grace that apprehends the joyes thereof; and hope expects that which faith beleeves, and that hope becomes an anchor to the soule, that stayeth the soule in all the waves & troubles of the world; and what is the ground of that hope but faith: Faith stirreth up hope, and hope pitcheth on the promise, especially of life everlasting. And thus faith becomes a quieting & a stilling grace, because it raiseth the soule by representing and making reall to it, better things then the world can give or take, as it doth also at other times present heavier things then the world can threaten: faith makes things present to the soule,
and

and because it layes hold on
divine things, greater then
any thing here below, there-
fore it overcomes the
world, and all things in the
world, yea hell it selfe, be-
cause it layes hold on hea-
ven and happinesse, upon
the power of God, and the
mercy of God in Christ, and
upon thole rich promises :
What is in the world, or in
the ranke of good things,
but faith out-bids it by set-
ting heaven against it : and
what evill is there but faith
over-comes the feare of it
by setting hell against it : I
shall have such a good, if I
yeeld to such a lust : I, but
what is that to heaven, faith
Faith ? For faith being the
Hypostasis the substance of
things to come, makes them
sub-

substantiall, and evident to the soule, as if they were already subsistent, being looked upon in the certainty of the word; and so it affects the soule deeply, and upholds it strongly, even as if the things themselves were present, and so it banisheth and dispels all discomforts, the 11. Chapter to the *Hebrewes* is a Comment upon this truth in the example of *Moses*, and many others. What greater object of feare might be presented to a man, then the angry face and countenance of a terrible Tyrant? Yet when by the eye of faith, he saw him that was invisible, and then looked upon *Pharaoh*, what was *Pharaoh*, to God? When *Micaiah* had scene GOD
fit.

sitting on his Throne, what was *Ahab* to him? And when the soule hath entred into the vaile, and sees the glorious things of heaven, and happinesse, what are all things below? Faith sets the Soule on a Rocke, above the reach of waves, upon the love of God in Christ. And therefore set the grace of Faith on worke, keepe it on the wing, preserve it on exercise, and faith exercised will be able to comfort the most dejected soule in the world, and to raise it above all the troubles that can be imagined, or befall us.

The



THE
Second Sermon.

Ioh. ch. 14. ver. 1.

Let not your hearts be troubled; ye beleeve in God, beleeve also in me.



He words of
dying men
departing out
of the world,
as being most
serious and weighty, are
most to be regarded. The
children of God the nearer
they are to heaven, the more
futeable they are to their
hea-

heavenly condition. So was our Saviour Christ, and therefore he labours to furnish his Disciples (and in them us) with good counsell to establish their hearts against the troubles and scandals to come. If you consider the time when hee spake these words, it was when he himselfe was to be troubled more then ever was any creature: yet hee forgets himselfe, and his future troubles, and thinkes how to raise up and comfort them. He foresaw that *Peter* would deny him, that the rest would leave him, he foresaw that they would be dejected, when hee was gone: yet let not your hearts be troubled.

Oh what a blessed and
sweet

sweet Saviour have we, that thinkes more of us, then of himselfe, that he forgets his owne troubles, and sufferings, and extremities, and thinkes of the supporting and upholding of his Disciples.

This came from the same love that drew him from heaven to earth, which moved him to take our nature, and in that nature to dye for us : and what may wee not expect from that sweet and large love? out of the same bowels of pittie and compassion, was it (that they should not bee over-much dejected) that he saith, *Let not your hearts be troubled.*

Hee knew his Disciples were in the state of grace already : yet he foresaw they were

were such, as would sinne. Nay, that *Peter* would deny him. Yet the foresight of *Peters* and their unkindnesse, did not take away his love, and pittie, and compassion towards them: Yet notwithstanding he gives them sweet counsell, nay after they had dealt unkindely with him, and denyed and forsooke him indeed; hee tooke no advantage of their weakenesse. He knew they had a secret love to him, that they had in them a root of affection, and hee was so farre from taking advantage for it, that presently after he saith, *Tell my brethren that I ascend to my God, and their God, yea and tell Peter so too,* that hath dealt most unkindly of all with mee. What a gracious

gracious and mercifull Saviour have we, that fore-sees what ill we will doe; and when we have done it, takes no advantage against us, but is carefull to keepe us from too much dejection, though he knew he would deale so unkindely by him: and indeed he did of purpose take our nature, that he might be a mercifull high Priest.

Christians must distinguish betwixt *dejection* and *griefe*: It had been a sinne for them not to have grieved, as well as it was a sinne for them to be over-much troubled. None are more sensible then a Christian: *Sentit dum vincit*, hee feels troubles whiles he overcomes them.

Christ speakes to the heart, because the heart is
D the

the seat of trouble: *Let not your hearts be troubled.*

Christ could speake to the eares and heart at once, his words were operative, and conveighed comfort with them. Together with his words, hee let in his holy Spirit, that comforted them. Gods commands in the ministry of his word, suppose not that we have any ability to execute them, but together with his word there comes forth a power. As when Christ said, *Lazarus arise*: there went forth a power that caused *Lazarus* to arise. As in the Creation he said, Let there be light; for the Word, and the Spirit goe together.

Having taken them off from trouble, he shewes a way

way how to raise them,
which is by faith, Ye be-
leeve in God, beleeve also
in me.

The object in beleeving is
God, and Christ Mediator :
we must have both to found
our faith upon. We cannot
beleeve in God, except we
beleeve in Christ : For God
must be satisfied by God,
and by him that is G O D
must that satisfaction be ap-
plied, the Spirit of God, by
working faith in the heart,
and for the raising of it up
when it is dejected; all is su-
pernaturall in faith. The
things we beleeve are above
nature, the promises are a-
bove nature, the worker of
it the holy Ghost, is above
nature : and every thing in
faith is above nature : there
D₂ must

must be a God in whom we beleeve: and a God through whom : if God had not satisfied God, the conscience would never have beene satisfied, there would still have beene misdoubtings. And yet if the holy Ghost sets not down the heart, and convinceth it throughly of the all-sufficiency of that satisfaction, it would never beleeve neither. And therefore as ye beleeve in God, beleeve also in me, for I am God too.

We may know that Christ is God, not onely by that which Christ hath done: the Miracles, which none could doe but God, but also by what is done to him. And two things are done to him, which shew that he is God, that

that is, *Faith*, and *Prayer*, we must beleieve onely in God, and pray onely to God. But Christ is the object of both these, here he is set forth as the object of Faith, and of Prayer in that of Saint *Stephen*, *Lord Iesus receive my spirit*. And therefore he is God, for that is done unto him which is proper & peculiar only to God.

That which I shall now touch upon is this: we must remember what a strong foundation, what bottome, and basis our faith hath; there is God the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost, and Christ the Mediator, that our faith may be supported, we have him to beleieve on, who supports heaven and earth. As in 1. *Hebr.* and

Colos. 1. he created all things as well as the Father; he is honoured of all as well as the Father; he that supports the pillars of heaven and earth, is able to support the pillars of thy soule.

But how doth faith in Christ ease the soule of trouble?

In a word, as it carrieth the soule out of it selfe unto God in Christ, and unto Christ, uniting, and making us one with him, and so sets the soule above all trouble whatsoever: for being one with Christ, we are already with him in heaven. And againe, faith is a grace that presents things to come, as present, and so establisheth the soule. It is the hypostasis of things,
it

it gives substance to them in the promise, and it doth never leave to doe it till the things subsist indeed. It is a grace that accompanieth the soule to heaven, looking upon things in the word of him that is truth it selfe, and so giving a kinde of being to them throughout all the way to heaven, till they have a being indeed. And then faith is out of office, yeelding it up to sight, and the full enjoyment of all.

But did not the Disciples beleeve already?

Yes they did, but they had need to renew their faith, as occasions were renewed, and as troubles were to increase. *Beleeve in mee.* It is as he should have said, Now there is occasion for

Quest.

Answ.

you to use your faith, I must be taken out of your sight, you must see me suffer, and you had need of an extraordinary measure of faith to see me in such abasement, and yet to beleeve that I am God.

We must grow from faith to faith, that we may live by it continually, and we must increase with the increase of God, that as our difficulties do encrease, our strength to goe through them may encrease also: as they prayed, Lord encrease our faith.

I gave some directions how we might not be troubled.

And first, we must labour to have our part and portion in Christ, else there is nothing belongs to us but trouble. There are two sorts of men

men in the Church, some that usurpe a peace and exemption from trouble, as if joy and comfort were their portion. Sathan is wise enough not to trouble them, and they take an order with their consciences, that they shall not trouble them till needs must, till the houre of death, or some dismall accident: the only way for such is to be troubled, that their trouble may be a foundation of their comfort. For to such as live in their sinnes against conscience apparently, so that every man may see it, and yet are not troubled, they have no interest in comfort, nothing but woe and misery belongs to them. Indeed Christ came to

save sinners, but it is broken-hearted sinners, penitent sinners, that are weary, and heavy laden under the burthen of sinne. And therefore though they speake peace to themselves, yet we dare not speake any comfort to them from Christ: As Iehu said to *Ioram*, *What hast thou to doe with peace, as long as the whoredomes of thy mother Iezabel are so many?* Dost thou talke of peace as long as thou art a swearer, a prophane liver, a malicious person, against all that are truly good? what hast thou to doe with peace?

Now in the visible Church there is another sort that Satan laboureth to trouble; since he cannot keepe them in the state of nature, but they

they breake from him, Christ pulling them out of Sathans kingdome by the power of his ordinances, and holy Spirit, hee labours to trouble them in their peace all he can; because they bee in the world, above the world, he envies their condition, that they should enjoy that paradise which hee left, the comforts that hee once had, and therefore hee labours to disturbe them in their comforts.

The estate of such is mixt, here in this world: they have that in them, and without them, which will alwayes be a cause and occasion of trouble. They have corruption in them not altogether subdued: and they have without them Sathan taking

taking advantage against them: and the world opposing them. These although they have something in them that must be subdued, yet something also that must be cherished and strengthened. And therefore these are the persons to whom comfort properly belongs.

In heaven wee shall have no need of being comforted, for there our peace shall be to have no enemies at all: our peace here is to have comfort in the midst of discomfort, and an heart enlarged in troubles.

He speakes this to them here who were beleevvers already: *Ye beleevve in God*, who he knew should not be troubled, *Let not your hearts be troubled.* So that to the end

we

we may be subjects capable of comfort, we must be such as by faith are one with Christ, and so reconciled to God. All motion ends in rest, and all the rest of the soule ends in God, the centre of the soule. And therefore before the soul can settle it self, it must be brought to God, through Christ, that must be laid as a ground.

Now there is a threefold malady that troubleth us, and there must be a threefold peace, and ground of comfort against them.

First, it is a trouble to the soule (when once it is awakened) that G O D, and it should be in ill termes, when the soule lookes upon God as angry, and displeased with it.

A-

Againe, the soule is troubled, when it lookes upon it selfe, and sees nothing but turmoiles and seditions there.

Thirdly, when it lookes upon the affaires of the world, and accidents here below, it is full of confusion for the present; and it is full of feares for time to come, that things will be worse and worse. Thus the soule whilest it is in the world, is troubled about its peace with God, and with its selfe, and about this evill world.

Now before the soule can yeeld to any quiet, all these quarrels must be taken up.

I A peace must be made betwixt God and us, by the great peace-maker, who is also called *our peace*, and when

when we be justified and acquitted from our finnes by the bloud of Christ sprinkled on our soules by faith, that bloud of Christ speakes peace to the soule in the pardon of sinne: *being justified by faith, wee have peace with God, through Iesus Christ our Lord.*

Then secondly, there must be another peace setled in some degree, and that is the peace of government in the soule; grace must be above corruption. They will be together in the soule whilest we are here, but sinne must not have the dominion. This is such a peace, not, as will admit of no conflict, but a peace wherein grace may get the better, and where grace gets the better, it will keepe

keepe corruption under, and
G O D gives his Spirit to
whom he gives his Sonne :
that as we be in good termes
with G O D, so our natures
may be like his : That wee
may love and delight in
what he loves and delights
in; and so may be as friends,
enjoying acquaintance and
communion together.

I but thirdly, there is con-
fusion in the world, and ma-
ny accidents may fall out,
that may disquiet us for time
to come. Now before the
soule can be at peace in that
respect, it must know, that
being once in Christ, recon-
ciled to God, and having
the Spirit of God, it is under
a gracious government and
providence, that disposeth
all things to good, and ma-
keth

keth every thing peaceable.
Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia: When God is at peace, all is at peace, yea so farre at peace, that they have a blessing in them. The curse and venome is taken out of them by Christ, who tooke the curse on himselfe, and satisfied the wrath of God, and now they be not onely harmlesse, but medicinall, and helpfull, so that they be all ours, and made in some sort serviceable to further our spirituall good.

When our husband hath all things committed unto him in heaven or earth, will he suffer any thing to befall his dearely beloved Spouse, that shall be disadvantageous, and prejudiciall to the

the maine. No, no, he will not suffer any thing to befall her, which he will not rule, and order, and overrule for the good of the Church, and so there comes to be that third peace.

And for the time to come a Christian knowes, that whom Christ loves, hee loves to the end, and the good worke begun shall be perfected to the day of the Lord. He knoweth he is in heaven already in his head: *Hee that beleeveth in Christ hath everlasting life*, and is triumphing in glory in his head.

And therefore nothing can dismay a Christian that is truly in Christ; grant the first, grant all, stand upon good termes with Christ, be

re-

reconciled to God, and nothing can doe thee hurt.

But when we at any time come to comfort, such as have comfort for their portion, it stickes here; if I were a childe of God indeed, or if I did beleewe, it were something. These be good comforts indeed, and certaine, and true, for they be the word of God: but what is this to me? I finde universally, that comfort stickes there, and therefore we must labour to remove that objection.

First of all therefore labour to have a good judgement of maine truths, that these comforts are the comforts of the holy Ghost, and that the word is the word of God, by a generall knowledge

ledge of the truth of the promises, thou shalt be better able to apply them. If thou sticke in the principles, so as not to know them, nor to beleieve them; there is no talking of the application of faith upon them; we must make that our owne in particular, which we beleieve first in generall. And therefore Christians must first be well scene in the Scriptures, and in the promises there, that they may know what belongs to them, and apply them to themselves.

I but my faith is weake?

I answer: The office of faith is to knit to Christ, and the weakest faith will doe that, as well as the strongest: And when we are once one with Christ, then our perfection

fection is to bee found in him. It is the office of Faith to bring us to Christ, and then to looke to him for all perfections, and for thy title to heaven, and not to thy faith. And true faith is faith even in the least degree of it. As wee say of the elements, every drop of water is water, and every spark of fire is fire. And therefore the argument will not hold, if we have not much faith, we have no faith; or if wee have no feeling, wee have no faith. There are many common errors which wee must remove, that they may not hinder us in the application of Christ, by distinguishing between strong grace, & true grace; & above all, labour to know & un-

understand the covenant of grace. The tenor of which requireth no set measures of grace, but if we beleeve, we shall not perish, but have everlasting life; under so gracious and mercifull a covenant are we.

2 But this is not sufficient to satisfie the soule. The very cleaving to Christ is indeed a sufficient ground of comfort; but yet to obtaine actuall comfort, there must be a knowledge that we doe cleave to Christ, and beleeve. There may be adherence without evidence; and there must be an act of reflection to cause faith of evidence, it must appeare to our selves that we doe beleeve before we can have comfort, though wee may be
true

true Christians, and goe to heaven without it. Therefore let us labour *to make our calling and election sure*: that is, in our selves, and in our owne apprehension: though it be never so sure in it selfe, and in Gods breast, yet we must labour to make it sure in our owne breasts, that sin may be pardoned in our owne consciences, that all may be reconciled in our owne hearts, that what is done in heaven, may be done in our hearts also, being cleared to our owne assurance. You see what advise the Apostle gives, *Give all diligence*: it is not got without *diligence*, nor without *all diligence*: *to make our calling and election sure*, that is, to make our election sure, by

2 Pet. 1.

by our calling, and to that end ~~to adde grace to grace~~. It is the growing Ciuitian, that is the assured Christian. Whilest we are yet adding to every heape, we shall get more abundant entrance, and further into the kingdome of Iesus Christ, as the Apostle there speakes.

3 And when we have attained any evidence of true faith, labour to keepe that our evidence cleare, let it not be spotted or defiled by any sinfull acts: you have many a good evidence that is so blurred with negligences, and daily errours in speeches and conuersation, that when they reflect upon themselves they conclude, Can such a wretch as I, that have so loose a tongue, that have

have no more watchfulnesse
over my heart, have any
faith at all. And thus God
doth suspend their com-
forts so, that though they
may be in a good estate for
the maine, yet they shall not
know it, and all because
they are not carefull to keep
their evidence, which wee
should preserve cleare and
bright, that it might be seen
and read upon all occasions.
And we should so keepe
them bright, that our con-
sciences may witnesse with
us, and that the Spirit and
the Word may joyne their
witnesse with our conscien-
ces. The Word saith, *That he
that loves the brethren is tran-
slated to life*, and he that hears
the word, as the word, is
Christ's sheep. Now doth thy

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con-

conscience tell thee, that though in weake measure, yet *I doe so*? Then here is the word, and thy conscience for thee: and doth the spirit witnesse with thy cōscience that it is so indeed? then it is well, thou keepest thy Evidence to purpose.

4 And when we have done this, let us make conscience not to yeeld to any base doubts, and feares, and objections of Sathan, and our owne hearts. When we finde any worke of grace, deny not the worke of God, lest we grieve the Spirit of God. As some melancholy Christians, that though every man may see the worke of God in them, yet yeeld so slavishly to the misgivings of their hearts, and the temp-

temptations of Sathan, that they conclude they have no faith, no love: though other Christians that can reade their evidence better, see that they have these in them; what dishonour is this to God and his Spirit, when a darke humour shall prevaile more then the Word, the truth it selfe: this is a great bondage which Sathan brings the soule into: that when there is evidence of faith in the fruits of it, yet men will beleieve a peevish humour, before the word and testimony of conscience, enlightened by the spirit. Take heed of it as a great pride in the heart, when wee yeeld more to a sturdy, darke, unsubdued humour, then to Evidence

it selfe.

Therefore in such cases hearken not to what feare sayes, or humour saith, or Sathan saith, or what the world saith, but hearken what truth it selfe saith, and what conscience saith, when it is enlightened by the Spirit, as in good times when we are at the best. True Christians, though more remisse, shall have so much comfort as shall support them from falling into despaire, yet not so much as shall strengthen them, and carry them into a vigorous life, fit for Christians.

5 When we have found any worke of grace, and thereupon that our faith is true, wee ought to comfort our selves, and to maintaine

our

our comfort by all meanes. Every grace is but faith exercised: when our Saviour saith, *Ye beleeve in God, beleeve also in mee*, hee might have said also in particular, Be patient, be contented, be comforted. But he names the root of all, Faith, wherein all graces are radically, which is therefore discerned in the fruits of it, so that if any grace be found, as love to the brethren, hope of life everlasting, or the like, there is faith. For the root and branches bee together, though the root is not alwaies discerned. And therefore when we discover any true faith in the fruit of it, let us support and comfort our selves with it.

For whē a man is in Christ,

E 3

and

and by Christ an heire of heaven, and a childe of God, what in the world can befall him, that should deject over much, and cast him downe? What losse, what crosse, what want of friends, hath he not all in God, and in Christ, and in the promise? Doe not the promises weigh down all discouragements whatsoever? Surely they doe. And therefore we must strive against dejection. For besides what I spake the last day, it is a dishonour to the profession of Religion, which is in it self so glorious, a dishonour to God, and to Christ, that when we have such glorious prerogatives, and privileges, which the Angels themselves admire; yet every petty crosse and

and losse that we meet with-
all in the world should cast
us downe, wee should take
heed exceedingly of this,
and should labour every day
to have a more and more
cleare sight of the promises
that belong unto us, and to
know the privileges of
Christianity, and renew our
faith in them continually,
that they may be fresh to us
in all temptations, and occa-
sions whatsoever.

I beseech you do but con-
sider any one grand pro-
mise, which if it be rooted
in the soule, how it is able
to support the soule against
all troubles whatsoever. As
that, *Feare not little flocke, for
it is your Fathers good pleasure
to give you the kingdome.* Or
that other: *If God spared not*

E 4

his

*his Sonne for us; how will hee
not with him give us all things
else?*

Labour to have these things fresh in memory, together with the privileges belonging to Christians. Thinke what is it to bee a childe of God, and an heire of heaven.

We must not looke onely to the blinde and darke side of our condition. Christians have two sides, one to heaven-ward, and God-ward; and that is full of glory, certaine, and immoveable. Another towards the world, and that is, oftentimes full of abasement, full of disgrace, and dejection. That is moveable, sometimes better, sometimes worse, as God pleaseth to dis-

dispenſe his government in the Church. Let us looke to the grace, to the cōforts that belong to that grace, to the promiſes, the beſt ſide, and not to be carried away with the darkneſſe of the other.

It is a terrible ſight to look upon ſinne, and miſery, and hell, & judgement to come; but what are theſe to a Chriſtian that is in Chriſt, that ſeeth them all ſubdued, and overcome to him? The afflictions of the world, and the croſſes of the world, what are they to a ſoule, that is already in heaven by faith, and ſeeth them all overcome in his head Chriſte. *Be of good comfort, I have overcome the world.* And therefore we muſt not be ſo malignant, as to looke

all upon one part of a Christian, and that the worser part which is the object of sence; for shame, live not by sence: but if we be Christians, let us live by faith, looke to the best part: looke upwards and forwards to that which is eternall.

5 And withall labour to keepe the graces of the Spirit in continuall exercise upon all occasions. For grace exercised brings certaine comfort: it may bee with a Christian in his feelings as with the worst man living; but he may thanke his owne negligence, his owne dulnesse; his not stirring up of the graces of God in him. For therefore it is that he hangs the wing upon every petty crosse, on every
very

very occasion: Labour to have an heart ready to exercise grace futeable to that occasion; for then grace will reflect sweetly, where there is sincerity and grace in exercise. Sincerity alone will not comfort a man, unlesse it grow up to fruitfulness: & fruitfulness which springs from the exercise of grace, hath a sweet reflection upon the soule. *Remember Lord how I have walked before thee, in truth, and with a perfect heart, saith Hezekiah.* He stood then most in need of comfort, and this comforted him, this his reflection upon his former sincerity. So when a man can appeale unto God, as Peter did, *Lord thou knowest I love thee: so much sincerity so much bold.*

boldnesse with God. And therefore let us keep grace in exercise, that we may be fruitfull in our lives and conversations, and then we shall be alwaies comfortable.

And to adde a little, there is no grace in a Christian, but if it be exercised, there is a suteable comfort upon it even here in this world. There is a *Premium ante Premium*, A reward before a reward. Nay, the Heathen men, *Sacrates*, and the best of them, so farre as they exercised the naturall goodnesse that was in them; their consciences reflected peace; so farre as they were good, and did good, they had peace, much more peace then bad men had. God gave even them some rewards,

wards, upon discharge of their duties: he will not be beholden to any man, that exerciseth any degree of goodnesse that is in him. Much more therfore shall a child of God enjoy it, when hee exerciseth his graces in any tēptatiō, when he overcomes any uncleane, earthly, vaine-glorious vindictive, or any other base lust, he shall finde peace of conscience suteable: and the more he growes in strength, and resolution for the time to come, the more he groweth in inward peace. *Righteousnesse* and *peace* goe together, not only the righteousness of Christ, and our reconciliation before God; but also the righteousness of an holy life, & peace in our own
con-

consciences.

Heb. 7.1. The righteousness of Christ entitles to heaven, and the righteoulnesse of an holy life sheweth my title unto comfort. As faith in Christs righteoufnes brings ~~peace~~, so sanctification also: Christ is *first King of righteousness*, and then *King of peace*. And therefore where there is no righteousness, there is no peace. But on the contrary, as heat followeth the fire, and as the beames have an emanation from the Sunne, so doth comfort arise from grace, especially from grace exercised.

Therefore they that would have inward peace, let them labour to be gracious, and that not onely in the inward frame of the heart,

heart, but in the exercise of grace upon all occasions. *For they that walke according to this rule, that is, of the new creature, peace be to them, and the whole Israel of God. Gal. 15. 16.* an exact and carefull life will bring contrant peace.

Therefore let us labour first for interest in Christs righteousness, and then for the righteousness of an holy life; for a conscience to justify us, that we have no purpose to live in any sinne, and a not accusing conscience will be a justifying conscience. What a blessed condition shall we be in, to be in Christ, and to know that we are so? Oh the heaven on earth of such a man, as is in that condition! For which

2 Tim. 4. 7

which way soever he looks, he findes matter of comfort. If he lookes backward, to the government of the Spirit that hath ruled him in the former part of his life, he may say with Saint Paul, *I have fought a good fight, I have runne the race that God hath set before me.* And what a sweet reflection is this? he is not afraid to looke backe to his life past as other men. If he lookes forward, hee seeth a place prepared for him in heaven, and there he sees himselfe already in Christ: henceforth *there is laid up for me a crowne of righteousness, which the righteous Iudge shal give me at that day:* and all that love his appearing, saith he, there. When there comes ill tydings of the

the Church abroad, and at home, it doth not much dismay him, his heart is fixed, he beleeveth in God, and in Christ, and that keepes him from being like a reed shaken with every winde. For reproches, and disgraces that he meets withall in the world, he weares them as his crowne, if they be for Religion & goodnesse sake. For his witnesse is in heaven, and in his owne conscience. And God in heaven, and his conscience within, do acquit him, & if he suffer for his deserts, yet in all afflictions God dealeth with him as a correcting father, he knoweth he hath deserved them; but he looks on them as comming from a father in covenant with him: And
what

what can come from a father, but what is sweet? He sees it moderated and sweetened, and in the issue tending to make him more holy. The sting is taken out, and a blessing is upon it, to make him better. And therefore what can make a Christian uncomfortable when hee hath the Spirit of Christ, and faith the root of grace?

These comforts being warmed with meditation, will sticke close to the heart: comforts that are digested, are they that worke. Let them therefore not onely enter into the braine and fleet there, but let them sinke into the heart by often consideration of Gods love in Christ, and the priviledges of Christians
here,

here, and in heaven, where
our head is, and where wee
shall be ere long. Warme
the heart with these, and
see if any petty thing
can cast thee
downe.

FINIS.
